

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Amendment to the Abstract

As requested by the Examiner in the Action of August 17, 2006, a new Abstract drawn to the claimed invention is provided.

Amendment to the Figures

A discrepancy existed between the specification and one of the original drawing sheets. The specification, for example, at page 10, line 9 and page 12, lines 22 and 25, refers to Fig. 2 and Fig. 2A. In the corresponding drawing, these figures are identified as Fig. 2A and 2B. To correct this discrepancy, a replacement drawing sheet with amended figure numbers corresponding to the language in the specification is being supplied.

35 U.S.C. 102 Rejections

In the Action, claims 1-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Miyake (U.S. Patent 6,188,490). Claim 7 has been amended to correct a typographical error and new claims 10-17 have been added. No claims have been cancelled. As discussed below, Applicants believe that Miyake fails to teach or suggest the claimed methods.

As a preliminary matter, the subject matter to which the pending claims are directed will be briefly reviewed. The pending claims relate to computer-implemented methods for taking individual print jobs from a plurality of stored individual print jobs

and preparing an aggregate print job for printing. As mentioned at page 1, lines 4-5, illustrative examples of an individual print job could be, for example, a print job for printing a business card, letterhead, a sell sheet, an invitation, an announcement, a folder, or a brochure.

Representative examples of aggregate print job layouts are shown in Figs. 2 and 2A. (These figures, as originally filed, were labeled as Figs. 2A and 2B. As mentioned above, a replacement drawing sheet changing the reference numbers to Figs. 2 and 2A is submitted with this amendment. The figures will be referred to herein by their amended designations as Figs. 2 and 2A.) Fig. 2 shows an example of an aggregate print job containing many individual business card print jobs arranged in a 7 by 18 configuration. Element 50 illustrates one of the business card print jobs. As discussed at page 12, lines 21-24, this aggregate print job allows simultaneous printing of many different business cards on relatively large printing sheets, for example sheets having dimensions of 1.0 meter by 0.6 meter. As discussed at page 27, lines 16-23 and page 28, lines 5-13, printing the aggregate print job shown in Fig. 2 on 250 sheets, stacking the printed sheets, and cutting the sheets, for example with a guillotine cutter, would create 126 (7 rows times 18 columns) individual sets of 250 business cards.

Individual print jobs for the same type of product may be ordered in different quantities. During the order process, the customer is provided the opportunity to select a print quantity from a menu of available quantities. (see quantity selection tool shown in Figs. 4Q-4S). For example, in the disclosed embodiment, customers ordering business cards are allowed to place an order for a minimum quantity of 250 or a larger quantity that is a multiple of 250 (e.g., 500, 750, 1000). Different types of products, such as brochures, letterhead, and so forth, could have different available order quantities.

When an aggregate print job is going to be prepared for printing, the number of copies of the aggregate print job that will be printed is determined. That aggregate print job print quantity is then used in combination with the order quantity for each stored individual print job to determine the placement of individual print jobs in the aggregate print job layout. This process is discussed at page 26, lines 8-19. Individual order quantities that are larger than the aggregate print job print quantity are handled by automatically placing an individual print job in the number of positions in the aggregate print job layout that is equal to the multiple of the aggregate print quantity that was ordered. For example, referring again to Fig. 2, if the aggregate print job 52 is to be printed at a print quantity of 250 copies and a customer had ordered a quantity of 500 business cards, that customer's print job would be printed in two of the 126 positions in the aggregate print job template, thereby yielding the desired total quantity of 500 cards. An order for 750 business cards would be printed in three positions and so forth.

Miyake, by contrast, is directed to a completely different and unrelated situation. Miyake discloses a system that offers various printing options to a user who wants to print a multi-page document. Miyake assumes that in some cases a user who wants to print X pages of material may not want the material printed on X different sheets of paper. For example, referring to Miyake Fig. 5, a user who is printing the six pages 1-6 may desire to have the pages printed in a reduced size on only two sheets of paper, identified as Y1 and Y2. As discussed in Miyake, for example at col. 2, lines 44-45 and col. 3, lines 16-21, and as depicted in Figs. 2A-2E, Miyake supports five standard "layout pattern selection choices". In other words, the user can choose to have 1, 2, 4, 9 or 16 pages of input material printed onto a single output sheet. The particular one of these five possible layouts that will be used for a particular print operation is determined by the user's use of the "layout mode" tools presented to the user on Print Setup screen Q1 (Fig. 3)

The Layout Mode tools only control which of the five standard layouts will be used. These tools do not control how many copies of a page will be made. In Miyake, the control of the print quantity (i.e., the number of copies to be printed of each input page) is completely separate from and independent of the Layout Modes controls. The print quantity is controlled by the “# of Prints” menu located near the top of the Print Setup window shown in Fig. 3. Regardless of which layout is used, each individual input page gets one and only one position in the layout. There is no suggestion or possibility that one of the input pages will be placed in more than one position in a layout.

In summary, the premise of Miyake is completely different from that of the pending application. Miyake teaches a system for starting with a specific set of pages to be printed and, based on user inputs from Print Setup Q1 (Fig. 3), selecting which standard layout (Fig. 2A-2E) will be used for the printing the pages. Miyake contains no disclosure whatsoever that teaches or suggests the methods of the pending claims.

Now, comparing Miyake to the specific claimed elements independent claim 1, it can be seen that Miyake does not teach the claimed method. Miyake does not disclose storing individual print jobs as recited in step (a) of claim 1. In the Action, the Examiner cited “items 1, 2, 4, 9, or 16” in Fig. 4 as showing stored individual print jobs, but these items in Fig. 4 are clearly referring to the five different standard layouts depicted in Figs. 2A-2E and not individual print jobs. The material to be printed arrives from a remote Application and is indicated in Fig. 4 as “Dg”. See also, col. 2, lines 65-67.

Miyake does not disclose storing a print quantity associated with each individual print job as recited in step (b). The print quantity at which the layouts containing the input pages will be printed is dynamically assigned by the Miyake user at the time of printing using “# of Prints” menu shown in Fig. 3. In any event, all

pages in the multi-page input document level are printed in exactly the same quantity. There is no disclosure that one page of an input document might be printed in a different quantity than another page in the same input document.

Because Miyake has no notion of either storing individual print jobs or storing a print quantity for the individual print job, Miyake clearly does not disclose retrieving an individual print job from the stored individual print jobs based on an associated stored print quantity as recited in step (c).

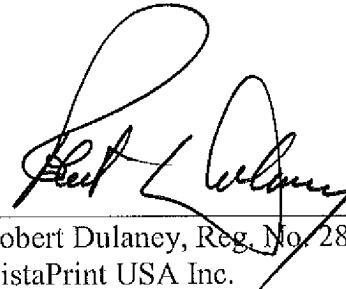
Finally, regarding step (d) and (e), there is no suggestion in Miyake that the same page might be placed in more than one position in a layout. Each page in the input pages to be printed gets one and only one position in a layout.

Turning now to independent claims 7-9, these claims similarly are not contained in the teaching of Miyake. These claims are directed to methods for use with a system “having a plurality of stored individual print jobs, each stored individual print job having an associated print quantity, at least some of the print quantities being different”. This type of system is neither disclosed nor suggested by Miyake. Miyake has no notion of storing individual print jobs with associated print quantities and no notion of searching a plurality of stored individual print jobs to identify individual print jobs having a particular associated print quantity. Miyake does not teach searching stored individual print jobs to identify jobs having a print quantity that is substantially equal to the aggregate print quantity, as claimed in claim 7, does not teach selecting individual print jobs having a print quantity that is either equal to or a multiple of the aggregate print quantity, as claimed in claim 8, and does not teach identifying individual print jobs having an associated first print quantity that is a multiple of a second print quantity and assigning the individual print jobs to positions in the aggregate print layout based on the number of individual print jobs that were identified, as claimed in claim 9.

For the reasons discussed above in connection with independent claims 1 and 7-9, dependent claims 2-6 and 10-15 are likewise patentable. Favorable action and allowance of pending claims 1-15 is respectfully requested.

Please charge Deposit Account 502765 for any fee required by this amendment. If the Examiner believes a phone call would serve to advance the prosecution of this case, he is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number below.

Respectfully submitted,



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